

The Defence Professor ran to Harry and raised his wand.

"I'll sort this out." He said.

"He should go to the hospital wing." Oliver Wood said.

"Nonsense, I'll fix this in a jiffy." Lockhart said. He cast a spell and there was a blinding flash.

"Well, what a fine job he made of it! I'll have to get some Skele-Gro." Pomfrey said as she went into her store cupboard. Instead of repairing the breaks, Lockhart had removed the bones from his right arm. Shouting could be heard as she was looking in the cupboard – all the Skele-gro bottles had been smashed.

She walked back over to Harry. "I'm sorry Mr. Potter, but regrowing the bones in your arm will have to wait until I can either get some skele-gro from St. Mungo's or Professor Snape. Now, can you open your eyelids for me please?"

"I can't." Harry said.

"Allow me." Madam Pomfrey said and she lifted his eyelids. With a gasp, she stepped back.

13:34

In the Gryffindor common room an hour later, a party was in full swing to celebrate Gryffindor's victory over Slytherin. Somehow, Fred and George Weasley managed to get a supply of butterbeer and lots of sweets which they threw into the crowd. Hermione Granger came down from her dorm.

"I can't believe you lot!" she shouted. Everyone stopped what they were doing. "Harry has lost his eyes and an arm and here you are celebrating!"

"Lighten up Granger." Someone shouted.

Hermione went to leave the common room. Ron blocked the way.

"Where are you going?" he demanded.

"Going to see my best friend not that you care." Hermione said. She made to leave but Ron held her back.

"Harry won't notice if you're there or not." He said.

"He needs a friend at this time." She said and pushed Ron aside.

"Petrificus Totalus." He said. Hermione fell to the ground under a full body bind.

"It's for your own good." Ron said, "No-one will want anything to do with him now. It's best you cut all ties with him now."

Everyone looked shocked at what Ron did and said but decided to wait for a Prefect to come before they said anything.

The same time

"Can you say that again Poppy?" Dumbledore asked.

"Professor Lockhart not only deboned Mr. Potter's right arm, he also vanished his eyes. There is nothing that can be done about them – I tried everything I could, even Finite. Not only that, I've just discovered that my supply of Skele-gro has been sabotaged. I've checked with St. Mungo's and Severus, and the latest enough potion to regrow Mr. Potter's arm can be made is Christmas."

"Thank you Poppy." Dumbledore said. He turned to the staff (Lockhart was not there, he had been confined to a room). "What are we going to do with Harry?"

"One thing's for sure – he cannot return to the Dursleys." McGonagall said, "They won't accept him as he is."

"He must return there for his own safety. Minerva, I ask that you go there and inform them that Mr. Potter will be returned there next week."

Pomfrey stepped forward. "Albus, the boy is showing signs of severe abuse. If you send him back there, I will have to file a report with the Ministry. I've been powerless to do anything about it because you

presented me with that form signed by them forbidding him from having magical treatment. I will go with Minerva and inform them though because the law says we have to."

"Very well." Dumbledore said, "I will allow either your or Minevra to become his guardian."

"No Albus," McGonagall said, "I'm too old and Poppy is too busy to be a mother. We have plenty of time to arrange something, maybe Molly Weasley will take him in. I will become a temporary guardian however until we can arrange it."

16:00

Dumbledore stood up in the Great Hall while McGonagall and Madam Pomfrey were gone.

"I am going to address some of the rumours circulating the school. Gildory Lockhart did remove Harry Potter's eyes and one of his arms. I have terminated his employment effective forthwith." He said.

"Who will teach Defence now?" an N.E.W.T student asked.

"I will be teaching Defence Against the Dark Arts until a replacement teacher is found." Dumbledore said. Some students laughed, "I assure you, I am not completely past it."

"What about those very expensive books Lockhart had us buy? They don't teach us a thing!" another student asked.

"I have arranged for Florrish and Botts to refund the money for these books and a new set book will be issued."

"What about Potter?" a third student asked.

"I ask that people not pester him on what has happened. If he wants to talk about it, then he will. I will not tolerate anyone bullying him over his problems." Dumbledore said, "If I find out about anyone harassing him because of this, I will deduct house points and give out detention." He paid particular attention to Draco Malfoy.

At that exact moment

"GET AWAY FROM HERE YOU FREAKS!" Vernon shouted after McGonagall and Madam Pomfrey knocked the door. They were at Privet Drive while Dumbledore was addressing the school.

"Calm yourself Mr. Dursley. We need to speak to you about Harry." McGonagall said.

"WE DON'T WANT HIM BACK HERE!" Vernon barked, not realising what he was saying, "WE'VE PUT UP WITH HIM FOR ELEVEN YEARS! WE TRIED TO BEAT THE FREAKISHNESS OUT OF HIM BUT IT DIDN'T WORK!"

Both McGonagall and Madam Pomfrey were stunned by the outburst but not surprised.

"Do you really despise him that much?" McGonagall asked, "I know Dumbledore left him with you, I protested the decision and from what I've just heard, I was right. We've just checked and it seems you never filed for guardianship – how come? You do realise you've broken the law by doing so."

"Why should we file papers for him?" Vernon said, "As I just told you, we NEVER wanted the freak!"

"He will never have to suffer you and your family again." McGonagall said, "By the way, wizarding law requires a young witch or wizard to attend magic school, so your attempts to stop Harry from attending last year were illegal and if reported, you could have been fined a large amount of money. In fact, I might recommend that you do get reported for it."

The Dursleys were gobsmacked as the two witches left.

18:00

Lockhart was pacing around the empty classroom. Since the Quidditch game, he had been locked in it while it was determined what he had done to Harry. He turned to face the door as it opened. Amelia Bones walked in with two Aurors.

"Gilderoy Lockhart – you are under arrest for practicing healing without a licence and grievous assault upon a minor." Madam Bones said. The two Aurors grabbed him and dragged him out. They knew

that Lockhart was going to face serious trouble for damaging the Boy-Who-Lived. They had no way of knowing that they were about to fry bigger fish after examining Lockhart's wand.

19:00

That day's copy of the Evening Prophet was delivered to its subscribers not long after Lockhart's arrest.

HOGWARTS DEFENCE PROFESSOR BLINDS BOY-WHO-LIVED!

It has come to the attention of the Daily Prophet that incompetence at the hands of Gilderoy Lockhart, current Defence Against the Dark Arts Professor at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry has led to serious consequences.

During today's Gryffindor vs Slytherin Quidditch game, a rogue Bludger smashed into Boy-Who-Lived Harry Potter's arm, breaking it. Nothing unusual about that, stuff like that happens a lot in Quidditch and wounds like that are easily healed.

Mr. Potter held out until he managed to catch the Golden Snitch and win the game. Against the protests of friends and team-mates who tried to get him to the Hospital Wing, Professor Lockhart decided to take matters into his own hands. The results were that he deboned Mr. Potter's right arm and the most serious of all, he somehow vanished Mr. Potter's eyes, blinding the poor boy.

Professor Lockhart was arrested for practicing healing without a licence and causing serious harm upon a minor. As you readers know, Healing is only permitted to be done by licensed Healers although parents and other adults are permitted to heal minor wounds like scratches or broken noses.

We at the Prophet have also been hearing reports that Professor Lockhart turns each lesson into lessons about himself and several people have reported discrepancies in his books. We call for the Ministry to open an investigation into how such incompetence could have been permitted, considering most of the Hogwarts teaching staff were present at the game.

Undersecretary to the Minister, Delores Umbridge has called for Mr. Potter's immediate expulsion from Hogwarts, on the grounds that his

blindness makes him a heavy risk to the school's Pureblood population. She is also calling for the contents of the Potter vaults at Gringotts to be confiscated but she has given no reason to do so. There has been no word from Headmaster Dumbledore on the matter, although we are trying to get hold of him for a comment on this. The Gringotts goblins have told the Prophet that there are no grounds for the Potter vaults to be seized and being blind are not grounds for this to happen.

19:10

"Who leaked this story to the Prophet?" McGonagall shouted, throwing the newspaper down on the staff room table.

"It could be anyone Minvera," Professor Spout said, "There was bound to be some student who overheard the conversations in the Hospital Wing or maybe one of the Aurors who took Gilderoy away told them."

"If any student reported this to the Prophet, then they will lose fifty points and earn a month's worth of detention." McGonagall continued, "I would like you to all to check with your Houses to find out if anyone did leak this to the Prophet."

23:55

It had taken him a while, but Harry had eventually got to sleep – he wondered why Ron or Hermione hadn't been to see him. He woke up a few hours later to hear voices, he recognised as Dumbledore, McGonagall and Madam Pomfrey.

"What was she doing out in the corridor anyway?" the matron asked.

"We think she was going to see Potter. According to several witnesses," McGonagall said, "Ronald Weasley refused to see him and when she went to leave the Gryffindor common room, he put her under a full body bind, then when Percy Weasley went to see what was going on, Ronald claimed that Miss. Granger was firing hexes at him and then was going to find someone else to hex, and put her under a body bind to stop her before anyone else got hurt. The other Gryffindors set the record straight and Percy gave Ronald a detention. I shudder to think of the Howler he'd receive if Mr.

Weasley informed his mother. I would like to know where Fred and George Weasley got the supplies of Butterbeer from though."

Harry tried to look in their direction. "What's happened to Hermione?" he asked.

"I'm afraid she's been petrified like Mrs. Norris." Dumbledore said. He turned to McGonagall and Pomfrey. "We must all exercise caution – it seems the Chamber of Secrets is indeed open again."

On the bed, not that Harry could see, was the stiff petrified body of Hermione Granger.

Thanks for the good response to the first chapter of this. Also, thanks for the ideas suggested including giving Harry a pair of 'Mad-Eye Moody' eyes, which has already been considered.

CHAPTER TWO

Classes resumed a couple of days later. Harry had been given a guide cane to help him, but using it with his left hand caused accidents. Professor McGonagall therefore called for people to volunteer to help him. Only Neville Longbottom, Lavender Brown and Pavarti Patil offered their services. It was also known that Daphne Greengrass of Slytherin offered to help him, but Snape forbade it. So, the three took it in turns to guide Harry to class. Neville or the two girls copied down his homework for him, as Harry dictated it (dictation quills were forbidden in Hogwarts and Dumbledore was due to speak to the school governors about it).

Ron refused to speak to him and even hexed his sister Ginny when she tried to offer to help him. Percy gave him detention and deducted 20 points from Gryffindor.

The first Potions lesson took place that first day. Draco Malfoy made the first of many taunts the moment Harry came in.

"What's the point in coming to Potions Potter," he said, "You can't see a thing!" He then stuck his leg out and Harry promptly tripped over it. Neville grabbed him before he fell over. It was a sign of how much the Gryffindors despised Malfoy as they were all glaring at him. Daphne Greengrass and her best friend Tracey Davies also glared at him. Snape then came in.

"Get to your seats." He ordered. He then saw Harry struggling to find his seat. "Ten points from Gryffindor Potter for wasting time." There were even more glares. He gave the assignment and told the class to get on with it. Neville tried to help Harry but Snape stopped him.

"Ten points from Gryffindor. Mr. Potter can do it on his own." Snape answered. Malfoy laughed.

By the end of the lesson, Harry had cost Gryffindor House another fifty points for not doing the work – the protests by the other members of the house went unheeded.

During the lunch period, the Gryffindor students (along with the two Slytherins) in the Potions classroom went to McGonagall's office to protest at the way Harry had been treated in the class. It looked like there was going to be a full scale mutiny.

"The points will be restored and any punishments cancelled." McGonagall promised.

That evening, Dumbledore had called a meeting with McGonagall and Snape along with Professors Flitwick and Sprout.

"Severus, I've heard things about your lesson which had Mr. Potter in attendance," Dumbledore said, "You should be lucky you aren't teaching in the Muggle world, you can be sacked for what you did in class. However, this is our world and we don't have their rules about teaching."

"That brat has no place in my classroom or any other class in this school. It is of my opinion as Head of Slytherin House that Potter be expelled forthwith and returned to those Muggles. His memory of our world is to be obliterated and magic bound forever." Snape said.

"Mr. Potter will not be expelled," McGonagall said, "As Head of Gryffindor House, I say we allow him to stay. When Poppy and I visited the Dursleys to inform them of this, Vernon Dursley made death threats against Harry."

"I see that there is no danger to the students as long as precautions are made," Professor Flitwick said, "As the Head of Ravenclaw House, I vote for him to remain."

"He's not going to be much good in my classroom now," Professor Sprout said, "But given the right supervision and help, I say in my job as Head of Hufflepuff House, we give him a chance to prove himself."

"I will abstain from this vote," Dumbledore said, "So the votes from the Heads of House state that they wish for Mr. Potter to stay at Hogwarts. Now, the unfair point removal will be reversed and the detentions revoked."

"In the meantime, since Harry has no chance of learning Potions because of Severus' so-called teachings and allowing Draco Malfoy

to bully him, I am personally allowing him to be excused from Potions." McGonagall said.

Oliver Wood came over to Harry on the fifth day. He had been given a message by Lavender that Harry wanted to see him.

"What can I do for you Harry?" Wood asked.

"When it comes to Seeker tryouts, I think you should convince McGonagall to let Ginny Weasley tryout for the team. I saw her at her home during the summer and thought she was excellent. If she makes the team, I'll let her use my Nimbus 2000 – you'll need all the help you can against Slytherin."

"I'll ask but no promises though." Oliver said.

A couple of days later, Harry was walking towards the stairs. Lavender Brown had to go to the bathroom and Harry thought he'd try to make it a small way himself. Suddenly, the next thing he knew, he was crashing and tumbling down the stairs.

"What's wrong dear Potty?" a familiar voice (Draco Malfoy) could be heard, "Have a little accident?" He started laughing.

Then Harry felt a kick against his chest and face. "Thanks for the broom Potter." He recognised Ron's voice, "Now you can't see, you have no use for it. Oh, I've done your owl a favour and put it out of it's misery and finally, thanks for the key and money bag! The Weasleys will never be poor again." He made to leave.

"What's going on here?" a teacher's voice could be heard. Ron stopped in his steps.

"Professor," a student came forward. Harry recognised the voice as Hufflepuff Hannah Abbot, "I saw Draco Malfoy trip Harry up on purpose."

"Mr. Malfoy – you will come with me. You as-well Mr. Weasley – I heard your entire confession. If you killed Mr. Potter's owl, then I will see to it that you are expelled."

In the end, McGonagall found out that Hedwig was alright. An examination of her (just to make sure she wasn't harmed) found

several protection charms on her. Harry reluctantly told her that he had a seventh year student put them on her during the first year to protect her from Vernon, knowing that there was a strong chance he would try to kill her (he did try a few times over the holidays). However, Ron was found to have Harry's Nimbus 2000 broom and invisibility cloak in his possession along with Harry's vault key and a money bag. He was given two months worth of detention and the worst was yet to come. Lavender was spared punishment because Harry told McGonagall he went off on his own accord but he still had to spend the night in the hospital wing, Draco was also given detention and lost points. That evening, Professor Flitwick taught Harry a few charms to keep his trunk safe.

The day after, Neville helped Harry to the Great Hall. The post owls could be heard arriving. Suddenly, the voice of Mrs. Weasley could be heard.

"RONALD WEASLEY! I ALMOST DIED OF SHAME WHEN MCGONAGALL FIRE-CALLED ME TO TELL ME OF WHAT YOU HAD BEEN DOING. HOW DARE YOU STEAL HARRY'S BROOM! HOW DARE YOU STEAL HIS MONEY! HOW DARE YOU STEAL HIS VAULT KEY! I AM JUST ABOUT READY TO COME TO HOGWARTS TO DRAG YOU HOME AND TEACH YOU HOW TO RESPECT PEOPLE, NOT BULLY THEM BECAUSE OF THEIR PROBLEMS!"

Everyone laughed when Ron received the Howler – those who knew what he had done knew he deserved it. Percy came over to Harry.

"I want to apologize for the actions of my brother." He said, "I will make sure that he does nothing like it again."

"You don't need to apologize Percy." Harry said, "But thank you."

Ginny came up to Harry a few days later.

"I hear you had something to do with me getting a try out for the Quidditch team," she said.

"I did." Harry said.

"Well, I'm on the team as Seeker!" she said.

"That's great," Harry said. He turned to Neville, "Can you get that thing out of my trunk please?"

"What thing?" Ginny asked.

Neville came down a few minutes later holding Harry's Nimbus 2000. He gave it to Harry who gave it to Ginny.

"I can't accept this." She said.

"You can," Harry said, "I've no use for it now and you can't ride a Shooting Star against Nimbus 2001 brooms. Consider it a loan."

"Thank you." She said, giving him a hug.

A couple of weeks later, Lockhart was dragged into Courtroom 10 of the Ministry. He was forced into a chair which conjured chains which bound him to it.

"Gilderoy Lockhart – you are charged with practicing Healing without a licence, grievous assault upon a minor, who also happens to be heir to an Ancient and Noble House and finally, multiple unauthorised use of the Obliviation charm. How do you plead?"

It was discovered upon trying to find out what spells he used to vanish Harry's bones and eyes that there was evidence of widespread use of memory charms.

A man stepped forward. "My client pleads guilty your Honour. With all the evidence against him, he wishes to forgo the questioning of all witnesses and asks the court to pass sentence without any further ado."

He was sentenced to life in Azkaban for his crimes. There was a debate on how much compensation Lockhart should pay to Harry. His Quidditch skills were taken into account and it was the opinion of several people, including scouts who saw Pensive memories, that Harry would have done very well on the professional circuit. In the end, it was ruled that half of Lockhart's money would be given to Harry – the other half would go into Ministry funds (in other words, they were too lazy to find out who Lockhart had obliviated, restore their memories and compensate them). It was also ruled that all of Lockhart's books would be withdrawn from sale and destroyed.

Chapter Three

Dumbledore sat in his office pondering on things. He had just re-watched Harry's last Potions lesson in his Pensive and wondered what possessed Snape to act the way he does, and to let Draco behave the way he does. He had told Severus to keep an eye on Draco and make sure he didn't turn out like his father – Dumbledore was one of the many people who didn't believe Lucius Malfoy's claims of being under the Imperious Curse.

How could I have sent Harry straight back to classes without him preparing for what he has to do?

Dumbledore then decided he was going to remedy the situation.

The following day, Harry was called to Dumbledore's office.

"Mr. Potter," he said, "I wish to apologise. I sent you back to lessons without preparing you to learn how to cope with your blindness."

Harry didn't say anything but Dumbledore continued.

"I'm excusing you from lessons so you can learn to read in Braille," he said, "I was reminded that the law requires students from first to fifth years study Potions along with Charms, Transfiguration, Herbology, Astronomy, History of Magic and Defence Against the Dark Arts," Dumbledore continued, "I was able to get permission for you to have a private tutor. I'm arranging for you to be taught Potions by an old friend of mine. Horace Slughorn has taught blind witches and wizards before."

"Thank you." Harry said.

NOVEMBER 5th

An owl flew into the Hogwarts Great Hall and dropped a letter in front of McGonagall. She opened it and read it.

"That's all he needs now." she asked.

"What's wrong?" Dumbledore asked.

"It's the Ministry – my petition to gain temporary custody of Harry faces being turned down on the grounds that he and I are both at Hogwarts. They say that I can either resign and gain custody, or he can go to another school and I can have custody." McGonagall had decided to file for temporary custody until permanent custody could be sorted out.

"We'll sort something out Minerva." Dumbledore said, "If we don't get it sorted out quickly, Lucius Malfoy or other Death Eater families might make an attempt."

"What about the Weasleys?" McGonagall asked.

"It'll place too much strain on their finances, but I'm afraid we may have no choice." Dumbledore said.

Later that day, Dumbledore went to the Burrow and explained what was going on.

"Of course we'll take him in Albus," Arthur said, "I'll have the paperwork sorted out when I go into work tomorrow."

Two days later, an owl flew to Dumbledore and he read it. It was informing him that the Weasley's request of guardianship had been approved. Upon Dumbledore's recommendation, Arthur Weasley took it direct to Amelia Bones of the Department of Magical Law Enforcement who approved it on the spot.

That same day, Harry began lessons with Horace Slughorn. He took the time to help Harry learn to identify the right ingredients and taught him a spell to help stir the potions, it not being easy to stir with one hand.

Slughorn also told him stories about Harry's parents from when they were at school and he was Head of Slytherin.

"Lily was one of my most talented students," he said, "I told her several times she should have been sorted into my house. Really cheeky answers I got back too for that."

As time went by, Harry began to adjust to doing things without his eyes. He managed to learn Braille quickly. It was tricky using his wand with his left hand, but he managed to perform the spells but

not too well. McGonagall and Flitwick had to tell him though if he wasn't pointing his wand at the item he was supposed to be transfiguring or charming.

November turned into December. Another three students had been found petrified and certain members of Slytherin House again accused Harry of doing the deed but was cleared when it was established he was in classes when it happened.

Of course it didn't stop Draco Malfoy from making open accusations, of which no-one believed. Even members of Slytherin House didn't believe it.

That same day, Harry had a check-up with Madam Pomfrey, where she had administered some potions to help him gain a healthy weight.

"How come you don't order in any Mandrake potion?" he asked, "Surely it would be quicker than waiting for the Mandrakes Professor Sprout has to mature?"

"School policy I'm afraid," Madam Pomfrey said, "Nearly twenty years ago, Horace Slughorn, who as you know taught Potions before Professor Snape brought in Polyjuice Potion for a demonstration. Somehow, that idiot Sirius Black got hold of the potion and did something to it that put half of his year in the hospital wing for a month. The Headmaster therefore banned the bringing in of potions from sources outside the school and got the Board of Governors to sign off on it. That is why we don't have a lot of medical potions here – it all depends on how much Professor Snape and the NEWT students can prepare. I've tried to convince the Headmaster to make an exception so we can revive these students sooner, but the Board won't budge."

"Did you ever find out who destroyed the skele-gro potions?" Harry asked.

"I believe the Headmaster found out, but he hasn't told me," Madam Pomfrey said, "Anyhow, you're fine for now. Come back next week for another nutritional potion."

"Thank you." Harry said. He left the wing to find Daphne Greengrass waiting for him, well he didn't find her, she found him.

"Afternoon Harry," Daphne said, "Your friends had to sort something out and asked me to help you back to Gryffindor Tower."

Harry didn't know what to say.

The following day, McGonagall led Harry into Dumbledore's office helped him into a chair.

"Mr. Potter," a voice said, "My name is Lucius Malfoy – we met briefly at Flourish and Blotts in the summer."

"How do you do Mr. Malfoy?" Harry asked. He didn't like what he heard about the man but unlike Vernon, who would have either refused the business deal or done something unpleasant, he was determined to be polite.

"I'm doing well, thank you Mr. Potter. However, it has come to my attention that since the unfortunate incident with Gilderoy Lockhart, an appointment which was made against the advice of the school governors, my son Draco has sought to make your life at Hogwarts a living hell. I have also found out that he was responsible for destroying the skele-gro. Rest assured he will be punished for his actions – I don't know what Muggles do with people in your situation but in our world, we help people."

"Some Muggles would help. My relatives would not. If I went back to them now, they would either kill me or put me out on the streets for not being able to continue working as their slave." Harry commented.

"I see. As I was saying, Draco will be punished for his actions. His punishment will be that he will be forbidden to play Quidditch for the rest of the school year and his behaviour and school marks will need to improve if he is to stand any chance of rejoining the team next year."

"That sounds alright Mr. Malfoy."

"One final thing – I understand that with the unfortunate petrification of your friend Miss. Granger and the disownment of you by Ronald Weasley, you barely have anyone to help you. I am therefore transferring ownership of my house-elf Dobby to you."

Harry recognised the name Dobby and knew who he was after hearing his voice. He heard Mr. Malfoy free Dobby by presenting him with clothes, then he and McGonagall explained how to make Dobby bond to him. Harry was wary of doing it but Dobby assured him that he would be pleased to serve the House of Potter. Harry then had an idea – now Dobby was no longer serving his old master, maybe he could shed some light on this plot.

Percy came up to Harry a week before the Christmas Holidays.

"Harry," he said, "Mother and Father want you to come to the Burrow with us for Christmas." He said.

"Thank you Percy," Harry said, "But with Ron behaving the way he is, I don't think it would be a good idea."

"Don't worry about Ron," Percy said, "Mother has told him that he can either behave himself or stay here at school over Christmas."

"It's not right your family should suffer because of me. I've already given my notice to McGonagall that I'm staying."

"If you change your mind Harry," Percy said, "Just let me know." None of the Weasleys at Hogwarts knew about the guardianship and McGonagall hadn't told Harry so he didn't know. She knew that if he took up their invitation to spend Christmas at the Burrow, they would have told him there.

Lavender Brown also invited Harry to spend Christmas with her and her family. He reluctantly turned it down because they lived in Surrey near a certain town and he did not want to risk encountering two certain people until he could defend himself against them.

Suddenly, two days before the Christmas holidays, the monster of Slytherin struck again. Both Ron Weasley and Draco Malfoy were found petrified in a corridor.

Before I get the hate-mail for petrifying Ron, it is not a case of Ron bashing, but trying to use a victim never used before.

With continued thanks to alix32 for her excellent beta-work and hope she will still read my stuff after she reads my book.

Chapter Four

If you passed Dumbledore's office in the hours following the discovery of Ron and Draco's petrified bodies, you would have been greeted with the noise of adults behaving like children.

Lucius and Narcissia Malfoy along with Arthur and Molly Weasley were in the office with Dumbledore and McGonagall. Mr. Malfoy was berating Dumbledore over the lack of safety at the school which allowed two Purebloods to be petrified by Slytherin's monster (the other victims were either Muggleborns or half-bloods so he didn't care).

"What I want to know is," Mr. Weasley said, "why our sons were alone in that corridor ready to be petrified."

"I can only give this answer, Arthur," Dumbledore said, "According to the students, 'your son and Master Malfoy had another argument in the Great Hall in which Master Malfoy stated that he was putting money on if the next victim would die and hoped it would be a Mudblood.'"

Both Molly and Arthur gasped at the mention of that word.

"I thought I made it crystal clear to you, Lucius," Dumbledore continued, "when you were a student here that I would NOT tolerate the use of that word and I will NOT tolerate your son using it. I can't stop you from teaching him to use it out of the school grounds, but I can and will take action against anyone using it in my school."

Without another word, Mr. Malfoy stormed out of the office followed by his wife.

"He's going to make you pay for that dressing down." McGonagall said.

"Let him try." Dumbledore said.

McGonagall was right. Lucius Malfoy returned to the school that evening as Fudge was having Hagrid arrested and sent to Azkaban.

He had come with a letter of dismissal signed by all the school governors in effect telling Dumbledore that he was fired.

Harry was with them at the time – Hagrid had invited him and Dumbledore over for a cup of tea to cheer the boy up a bit (which worked as Fang pinned Harry down and licked him from top to bottom).

"I will of course go if the governors wish it, Lucius," Dumbledore said, "But before I go, there is one thing that I must do."

Mr. Malfoy looked as if he was going to protest but Fudge stopped him.

"I will escort Mr. Potter back to Gryffindor Tower, then I will return to my office to collect a few essential items before departing."

"Very well." Malfoy said.

"Dumbledore," Hagrid said, "I need someone to look after Fang for me, he knows and trusts Harry, so can he look after him please and Fang can help him?"

"I see no reason why," Dumbledore said, "Before you say anything, Lucius, the Hogwarts by-laws clearly state that a blind student or teacher can have a guide dog in addition to their familiar."

Hagrid put a lead on Fang, passing it over to Harry. He said a few words to the huge boarhound before allowing Fudge to lead him away.

As Dumbledore and Harry (with Fang) walked through the corridors, the former Headmaster began to speak.

"You must be on your guard, Harry," he said with grimness in his voice, "I don't know if you know or not, but Lucius Malfoy was part of Voldemort's inner circle. He was actually arrested in full Death Eater clothing – Death Eaters being the name of Voldemort's followers but following a 'donation' to the Ministry and St. Mungo's, he was released without charge following the words 'I was under the Imperius curse'. Mr. Malfoy has always been against my appointment here as long as he has been a school governor and he is using this incident to remove me from my position. For now,

Minevera will be in charge, as it is only a week before the end of term, but who knows who will be headteacher after the holidays."

"Do you think Mr. Malfoy did this to discredit and help dismiss you from the school?" Harry asked.

"It is possible, but the problem is how would he petrify the students and if he is keen to remove the Muggleborns from Hogwarts, why petrify his son and Mr. Weasley?" Dumbledore added with puzzlement, "My only theory right now is that someone in the school is behind this, backed by someone outside the school.

"As I said, keep on your guard. Stick with Mr. Longbottom – his grandmother carries just as much influence as Mr. Malfoy. Christmas for Molly and Arthur will be different now that Ron has been petrified. I suspect Hogwarts will be closed for the holidays so it can be prepared for my replacement. You should be safe at the Burrow over Christmas. It is possible that Mr. Malfoy will have one of his followers installed as Headteacher, there is a chance that it will be a former Death Eater who will relish the chance to kill the Boy-Who-Lived. Keep your house-elf by you at all times – he can apparate through Hogwarts' wards and can get you to safety. I will leave instructions with certain people."

Harry didn't have much time to ponder on Dumbledore's words as McGonagall came to him the next day.

"Mr. Potter," she said, "I'm sorry to be the one to tell you, but the Ministry has revoked the the Weasleys' guardianship of you and a restraining order has been filed against them, preventing any of them from coming near you or making contact with you."

"What does that mean?" Harry asked, already suspecting the answer and not liking it.

"If something is not done quickly, you could find yourself under the care of untrustworthy people." She said, "Albus is looking into things to try and prevent that from happening. I will keep you informed."

"Thank you, Professor." Harry said.

Harry was very lucky. McGonagall called him to her office the following day.

"Morning, Mr. Potter," she said, "I am here with Mrs. Andromeda Tonks and her husband Ted." McGonagall said.

"Pleased to meet you." Harry said.

"You too, Harry," Mrs. Tonks said, "I've not seen you since you were a baby."

"Albus managed to convince the Ministry to follow the legal route regarding your guardianship," McGonagall said, "By law, a wizarding family has to designate a guardian for children in the events of their untimely deaths. It was bent in regards to you as the then Minister Bagnold gave orders that you were to be hidden away."

"So the Ministry is why I spent ten years in hell?" Harry asked.

"I'm afraid so, despite the fact your parents specified you were never to go to the Dursleys. Your father wanted Sirius Black to gain custody of you.."

"Madam Pomfrey mentioned someone called Sirius Black – he sabotaged one of Professor Slughorn's potions that he brought in." Harry interrupted.

"I remember that incident," McGonagall said, "I deducted fifty points and gave him a month's detention for it. Anyhow, before I was interrupted.."

"Sorry," Harry said.

"Mrs. Tonks here was named as primary guardian. She has a daughter who has started training to become an Auror. She helped raise your father as a child and would have been happy to take you in."

"Thank you." Harry said.

"You're very welcome, Harry," Mrs. Tonks said, "Minerva, with your permission, I wish to take Harry to St. Mungo's today – I have already set up an appointment with them for him to have skele-gro for his arm and to see what can be done for his vision."

"Well, Mr. Potter has a lesson with me after lunch followed by a tutoring session with Horace Slughorn but since it is for legitimate medical purposes, I give my permission."

Within the hour, Harry and the Tonks family were in St. Mungo's. They were in a private room – Mrs. Tonks had requested one for Harry's privacy.

"You will have to take skele-gro for your arm, Mr. Potter," Healer Witowski said, "It will require an overnight stay. I'll get my assistant to bring some along. It's lucky Mrs. Tonks brought you in today – if you waited until after Christmas for some to be brewed at Hogwarts, it would have been too late.

"As for your eyes," the healer started, waving his wand.

"Madam Pomfrey said there was nothing that could be done." Harry said.

"Poppy is a good matron, but her expertise doesn't stretch to serious injuries like this," the Healer said, "If you were brought here straight away, we could have regenerated your eyes. It seems not only did Lockhart vanish your eyes, he also vanished the optic nerves. That will make a possible recovery very difficult."

The assistant came in and gave Harry the skele-gro. He spat some of it out, hating the taste. He drank some more and then the Healer put Harry in an enchanted sleep. He took Mrs. Tonks aside.

"I didn't want to say anything and raise young Harry's hopes," he said, "But there might be a way to restore his vision with prosthetic eyes. I did a similar procedure ten years ago with Alastor Moody. I will have to investigate before we go any further."

"Thank you." Mrs. Tonks said.

"In the meantime, I recommend you take action against Poppy Pomfrey and possibly the school."

"Why?" Mrs. Tonks asked in surprise.

"Harry is showing signs of malnutrition, going back years. There are also wounds from items like belts and knives. I've checked his medical records – bar a note regarding his birth and some incident last June, there is nothing, not even a Muggle doctor's report. As you know, all first years have to have a medical within their first few days in order to establish any medical needs that student requires. It seems Harry was not given one."

"What can we do about it?" Mrs. Tonks said, "I'm told his Muggle relatives did not treat him well."

"I will help you file charges against Poppy Pomfrey for medical negligence, and my report will also help you file charges against Harry's Muggle relatives."

"Thank you." Mrs. Tonks said.

Harry woke up the following morning to find he had his right arm again. Healer Witowski addressed him and Mrs. Tonks.

"You will have to take these nourishment potions to deal with the malnutrition and these regenerative potions to deal with your scars. As for the scar on your head, there will be a need for additional tests, but our curse scar specialist is on holiday right now."

"Thank you." Harry said. He took the first potion before flooing back to Hogwarts.

Dumbledore was right – it was announced that Hogwarts would close during the holidays. This led to last minute arrangements for some students who had to remain at school during the holidays. Some had to go and spend Christmas with friends because they couldn't return to their residences.

Madam Pomfrey was interrogated by the St. Mungo's Healers and confessed that on orders of Delores Umbridge, who claimed she could issue such orders, Harry was not given a medical upon arriving at Hogwarts. It also turned out that after treating Harry before the end of term, she was fined a large sum of money by Umbridge. She was also fined again and again for every time Harry was in the hospital wing. The St Mungo's Healers then decided to petition the Department of Magical Law Enforcement to file charges against Delores Umbridge – the request was granted. Umbridge was

told that she exceeded her authority – she had no power to say who could have medical treatment or not. Fudge, wanting to keep on Harry's good side, authorised Umbridge's sacking.

Harry (and Fang) rode in the train carriage with Neville, Lavender and the Patil twins. The trip was mostly silent, the group not knowing what to say. The girls felt slightly intimidated by Fang, despite the dog being a real softy. Hedwig watched Fang from her cage – Harry had explained to her that he was looking after the dog until Hagrid was released from Azkaban and that the dog was also helping him. Hedwig gave an appreciative hoot when Harry explained it and decided that she would tolerate Fang.

"Dobby," Harry said after the elf had brought him some food a couple of days later, "What do you know of this plot that you tried to warn me about in the summer?"

The elf struggled to say something but eventually spoke, "Dobby's old master had in his possession many items belonging to You-Know-Who!" he said, scared, "Old Master decided to plant an item on a student so that the Chamber of Secrets would open again!"

"What do you know of the Chamber of Secrets, Dobby?" Harry asked.

"Not much, young master," Dobby answered, "But Dobby knows it was opened around fifty years ago and a student was killed!"

"Would you be able to recover this item and give it to Professor Dumbledore?"

"Dobby pleased to serve!" the elf said before vanishing.

"Harry!" Mr. Tonks said the next day, "Professor Dumbledore is here to see you."

Harry went into the living room and sat down.

"Good morning, Harry," Dumbledore said, "Imagine my surprise when a house-elf came to me with a diary."

Harry explained his encounter with Dobby during the summer and how he asked the elf what he knew of the plot and on being

informed about the dark item and got the elf to recover it and deliver it to Dumbledore.

"I thought you would know what it was." Harry finished.

"I have several theories about it," Dumbledore explained, "Each one more disturbing than others. It was a diary owned by a Tom Marvolo Riddle – the original name of Lord Voldemort."

Harry was stunned.

"Dobby said the Chamber of Secrets had been opened before." Harry said.

"That is true," Dumbledore said, "A student was killed – you might know her as Moaning Myrtle. Hagrid, a student at the time, was accused of releasing the monster and was expelled. I, the only one to believe him, convinced my predecessor Dippet to keep him on as a gamekeeper – he had no family left. By a coincidence, the person who turned Hagrid in was Tom Riddle, then a fifth year Slytherin prefect. The school was searched at the time for the Chamber but we had no luck.

"The most disturbing thing about this diary is that it seemed to influence people's behaviour. Dobby told me that he took it from the belongings of Ronald Weasley – this must explain the way he's treated you."

"But Professor," Harry said, "Why would Ron have a diary? We have enough trouble getting him to write out his homework, let alone a diary unless he was writing about Quidditch."

"The answer is simple, Harry," Dumbledore answered, "There must be a Compulsion charm to entice the person to write in it. Lucius Malfoy must have somehow planted the diary on Ronald."

"But sir," Harry said, "In my time at the Burrow, Ron NEVER wrote a diary. It took Mrs. Weasley a lot of work to get him to do his homework. Ginny was the one with a diary. Before the match, I saw her moods change a lot."

"I will investigate this," Dumbledore said, "As soon as I have something to tell you, I'll let you know."

Chapter Five

All the students were called into the Great Hall following their return after the Christmas holidays. Dumbledore had not been reinstated as Headmaster but despite pressure from Lucius Malfoy, Professor McGonagall had been appointed Headmistress. However, to everyone's surprise, Dumbledore was still on staff but as McGonagall's replacement as Transfiguration teacher.

The petrified students had been removed from the school during the holidays and sent to St. Mungo's. There was no word on their progress.

New rules were announced.

"No-one is to walk the corridors alone," McGonagall said, "Everyone is to be in their common rooms by 6PM. All after school activities are cancelled until further notice – this includes Quidditch (Oliver Wood looked as if he was going to protest). All students will be escorted to and from their lessons by a member of staff. The owlery is also closed until further notice."

"What if we need to send a letter home?" one student protested.

"Letters will be given to your Head of House who will have them delivered." McGonagall answered. What she was not saying was that Lucius Malfoy and the Governors had ruled that all mail be checked and censored before being sent – a ruling protested by McGonagall but Malfoy got Minister Fudge's support on the matter."

Hogwarts was not the only place facing an increase in security. In the North Sea, stood the island of Azkaban. During the morning checks, it was discovered that Gilderoy Lockhart was dead and another cell, occupied by a Death Eater called Sirius Black, was empty."

"It's strange," the Warden of Azkaban said to Minister Fudge and Madam Bones, "Lockhart's body was covered with scratch and bite marks which could only have come from an animal."

"But there are no animals at Azkaban." Fudge said.

"None at all," the Warden said, "the Dementors keep even the birds away."

Fred and George Weasley went to McGonagall the day Sirius Black's escape was announced to the papers. They showed her the Marauder's Map and showed her all the passages. She took a ward stone out of a cupboard and activated it. Instantly, all secret passages in and out of the castle were sealed.

She was in a meeting with Fudge and Madam Bones the next day.

"It's a good job Mr. Potter has Hagrid's dog with him along with that house-elf Lucius Malfoy gave him." McGonagall said.

"Why did Lucius give Mr. Potter a house-elf?" Fudge asked.

"He gave the elf to Harry in compensation for everything Draco Malfoy has done to Harry since Lockhart vanished his eyes." McGonagall explained, "Anyhow, the dog and house-elf will provide Mr. Potter with protection, should Sirius Black enter the castle, which I can't see happening, considering I've sealed off all the secret passages in and out of the school."

"I will order an attachment of Aurors to help guard the school," Madam Bones said, "Auror Trainee Nymphadora Tonks will be one of them – through her mother, who I believe is Mr. Potter's guardian, she has a vested interest in keeping him safe."

The following day, most of the petrified victims returned to school. Everyone pressed the victims (except for Hermione and Ron because they wasn't there) for details. Malfoy gave the most information.

"I awoke in St Mungo's to have been told I was petrified," he said, "Aurors were there to take statements. All I could say was that the blood traitor Weasley challenged me to a duel in an abandoned corridor and then in the corridor, I saw a set of eyes in a mirror and the next thing I know, I'm in hospital. But before I saw the eyes, Weasley spoke in Parseltongue."

Percy Weasley went up to Harry.

"I don't know if you've heard, but Ron's been arrested!" he said. Harry showed a massive expression of surprise.

"Why's that?" he asked, stunned.

"Lucius Malfoy has claimed, based on Draco's statement that Ron was the cause of him being petrified, despite Ron being petrified himself. Luckily, Father was able to convince Amelia Bones to keep Ron under house arrest at the Burrow pending the completion of an investigation."

"If your family need money to hire a solicitor, tell your father to go to Andromeda Tonks, hire her and have her take the money out of my vault." Harry offered.

"That's very kind of you Harry," Percy answered, but he then started to sound defeated, "but all the evidence points to Ron. Even if he's innocent, the fact it was Lucius Malfoy's son and his word carries a lot of weight with the Minister, I think Ron will be finding himself in Azkaban by the end of the month."

Dumbledore went to his desk to find the diary. Based upon what the petrified students had said, he now had some idea what it was all about. He opened the drawer he had put it in only to find out it had vanished.

At Hogwarts, a student was doing her homework when a book appeared on the table with her books and parchment. Not thinking much of it, she took it and pocketed it.

As the weeks went on, people were awaiting Ron's trial. A lot of people had agreed that Lucius Malfoy was buying the trial and had already brought a guilty verdict. In direct defiance of the law, it was being broadcast on the Wizarding Wireless Network – Mr. Malfoy was determined to humiliate what he called the blood traitors

In the main courtroom, Ron was dragged into the room and put in the chair in the middle of the room. At once, the chains activated, chaining him to the chair.

"This is a trial dated January 30th, 1993 against Ronald Bilius Weasley. The charges are – unleashing the monster of Slytherin and assault upon seven people. Interrogators – Cornelius Oswald

Fudge, Minister of Magic, Amelia Susan Bones, Department of Magical Law Enforcement." A man's voice could be heard.

"Witness for the defence, Andromeda Hera Tonks." Mrs. Tonks said, "Before we start, I must protest the way my client has been treated. All evidence is circumstantial and I must request that he be released from the chains."

"Request denied," Minister Fudge said, "Auror Dawlish, please begin your case."

"Witches and wizards, since November 3rd 1992, several Hogwarts students have been petrified by someone claiming to be the Heir of Slytherin. On December 17th, Draco Malfoy and Ronald Weasley were found petrified in a corridor. After this day, there have been no further attacks.

"I call Draco Malfoy as my first witness."

Draco was brought in and sworn in.

"To the best of your recollection, please tell us what happened." Dawlish said.

"Weasley had challenged me to a duel and insulted my honour by suggesting that I had no honour by not turning up to a duel I challenged Harry Potter to a year before. He said to wait in a corridor on the second floor where there was a huge mirror. I went to put Weasley in his place and he turned up. I heard some strange noise, then in the reflection in the mirror showed a pair of yellow eyes. The next thing I know, I was awoken in St. Mungos." Draco said.

"Why would Ronald Weasley challenge you to a duel?" Dawlish asked.

"He's been preventing a friendship between myself and Harry Potter since our first day at Hogwarts. I admit I have been making rude comments about Potter since that incident following my last Quidditch game and have been causing trouble, but Weasley caused as much trouble."

Other witnesses were called who corroborated Draco's story about Ron's behaviour towards Harry. A set of Gryffindors even told the court that Ron hexed Hermione over Harry not long before she was petrified.

Andromeda stepped forward and requested to ask Draco a few questions.

"Why should we let a blood traitor ask questions of such a fine pureblood?" Dawlish asked.

"Objection." Andromeda said.

"Sustained," Madam Bones said, "Mrs. Tonks will be permitted to ask questions."

"Thank you Madam Bones," Andromeda said, "Now Draco, when you say you heard strange noises, did they come from Mr. Weasley?"

"I don't know for sure," Draco said, "But the noises started as soon as he arrived."

"It's been known that the Malfoy and Weasley families have been enemies for centuries. Would you be making this up to cause trouble?" Andromeda asked.

"No," Draco said, "That is for our respective fathers to deal with. I will admit I look forward to putting a Weasley in their place one day, but I would not accuse one of attempted murder unless I was sure of my facts."

Andromeda couldn't think of anything else to ask. Dawlish closed his case and Fudge decided to deliberate for a verdict.

"Objection!" Andromeda said, "My client has the right to put his side of the story across."

"Sustained." Madam Bones said.

Ron was sworn in. "Now Ron," Andromeda said, "Tell us in your own words what happened."

"Malfoy made another statement in public that he bet that the next victim would be a dead Mudblood and wished that Hermione Granger would be the victim killed."

"Hermione Granger is no longer a member of the wizarding world, so any reports that she was a victim is a fabrication." Dawlish said.

"Why is Miss. Granger no longer a member of our world?" Andromeda asked.

"Her parents decided to withdraw her from Hogwarts and requested that her magic be bound and all their memories of magic removed." Amelia Bones said, "The request was granted."

Ron was allowed to continue. "I did challenge Malfoy to a duel and met him in that corridor. The next thing I know, I was in St. Mungo's."

"So Mr. Weasley," Dawlish said, "Determined to cause serious harm to the heir of a major pureblood family, you arranged for Mr. Malfoy to encounter the monster of Slytherin, hoping it would kill him for these comments, but it backfired and the two of you ended up petrified."

Andromeda went to the back of the court after requesting a five minute recess where Dumbledore was sitting.

"I don't know what to do," she said, "All the evidence is pointing to Ronald, even though young Draco is the only one to identify him as being at the scene of an attack. What about the diary Harry mentioned?"

"It's mysteriously vanished, so we can't present it as evidence. Ron's been checked over and he can't plead that he was under the Imperius curse or possessed." Dumbledore said.

"The defence rests." Andromeda reluctantly said.

Five minutes later, Madam Bones stood up. "Ronald Bilius Weasley, it is my sad duty to announce that you have been found guilty of all charges and have been sentenced to..."

Suddenly, the door burst open and Auror Shacklebolt came in.

"Stop everything – there's been another attack. The monster has struck again and this time it's killed!" he said, holding back what was going to be a bombshell.

"Who was killed?" Madam Bones asked.

"Sirius Black!"

Chapter Six

"What do you mean, Sirius Black was killed by the monster?" Amelia Bones asked.

"Exactly that Madam Bones," Shacklebolt said, "A couple of students who snuck away found him and reported it."

Andromeda stepped forward, "In light of this new evidence, I must ask you to clear my client of all charges since he was here and unable to set the monster on Sirius Black."

"Mrs. Tonks – Master Malfoy has said that your client set the monster on him." Fudge began.

"What he said was that he heard Parseltongue as my client arrived but he was not sure he spoke Parseltongue. If you will not clear my client, then remand him in house arrest pending the completion of the investigation involving Sirius Black." Andromeda said.

"Request granted." Madam Bones said.

"What do you mean Hermione was removed from our world?" Harry asked. Andromeda had gone to Hogwarts to inform Harry about what was happening. Amelia Bones was with her to let him know about Sirius Black.

"Apparently, after she was de-petrified, her parents requested that she be removed from our world, so her magic was apparently bound and their memories of magic removed." Madam Bones said, apparently not believing the story.

"You don't think they wanted it, do you?" Harry asked.

"How can you tell?" Madam Bones asked.

"I've learnt how to tell the way people think by the way they say things and your statement said that you don't believe it." Harry replied.

"You're right there. By law, they would have to petition the current Hogwarts headmaster or headmistress, who is the only one who can grant permission to do so, to permit them to either leave Hogwarts

and magic or transfer to another school who is the only one who can grant permission to do so."

"Has McGonagall said anything?" Andromeda asked.

"She doesn't know anything about it," Amelia said, "I was planning to go to Miss. Granger's home when Lucius Malfoy convinced Fudge to fast-track Mr. Weasley's trial."

"Doesn't this clear Hagrid?" Harry asked.

"No," Amelia said, "Just because he may not have opened the Chamber of Secrets this time, there is no evidence that he didn't open it fifty years ago. Hopefully, a full and proper inquiry by Aurors I can trust will exonerate both Mr. Weasley and Hagrid." All talk about Sirius Black was forgotten.

At that very moment, Hermione Granger was reading through all her magic books. Her parents had withdrawn her from Hogwarts, but they were investigating new schools to send her to. The sound of knocking at the door could be heard and she went downstairs to find Amelia Bones.

Mr. Granger let her in and they went to the living room.

"My name is Amelia Bones and I'm head of the Department of Magical Law Enforcement."

"We don't want you here," Mr. Granger said, "We were told that because my daughter is what you would call a Muggleborn, there is no chances of her getting any justice over that attack. We've also heard about Professors at that school of yours blinding students along with removing bones from their bodies."

"We have a suspect in custody over the attacks," Amelia said, "But we were told that your memories had been modified and Hermione's magic bound."

"We asked a sympathetic person at that St. Mungo's hospital to spread that story so we could enlist Hermione at a new school without harassment." Mr. Granger said.

"Miss. Granger," Amelia said, "I understand no statement was taken from you. Do you remember what happened?"

"I was walking through the second floor – I had to convince the Weasley twins to show me a secret passage to the Hospital Wing so I could avoid Ron – a few hours before, he had hexed me for no reason. There were puddles of water on the floor and I looked at the floor, so I wouldn't slip up. I then saw a pair of yellow eyes then the next thing I know, I'm being woken up at the hospital. But before I saw the puddles, I'm sure I saw a girl with red hair in the corridor – it could have been Ginny Weasley."

"Thank you for this information Miss. Granger," Amelia said.

"How is Harry these days?" Hermione asked.

"He's slowly managing," Amelia Bones said, "He's had the arms in his bones regrown and his new guardian is investigating the possibility of magical eyes."

"That's possible?" Mr. Granger asked.

"Yes, one of my former Aurors uses a magical eye after he lost it in the line of duty," Amelia said, "I will ask Harry to try and write to you when he can."

"Thank you." Hermione said.

Amelia decided to keep the information regarding Ginny Weasley to herself – there was no evidence that she attacked anyone and if the statement came out, then Ginny would find herself sharing a cell in Azkaban with her brother if Lucius Malfoy got his way.

There was only one thing to do – try to clear the two Weasleys and Hagrid – the diary Dumbledore mentioned was the key to it, she was sure of it.

That Saturday, Andromeda Tonks returned to Hogwarts in order to take Harry to Gringotts for the will reading of Sirius Black. Also in the room were her sister Narcissa (Draco's mum) and Draco himself, looking very smug. Nymphadora was also there. Another man was already sitting down. Andromeda looked at the man, thinking he looked very familiar.

A goblin came in holding a roll of parchment. "This is the last will and testament of the late Sirius Orion Black, dated October 30th, 1981 and updated February 12th, 1993 and negates any wills filed before then."

He unrolled the parchment and started reading.

This is my last will and testament. I can certify that I am not under any duress or mind control spells or potions.

First of all, to my cousin Narcissa and her son Draco. I leave the total sum of ten galleons and Kreacher the house-elf.

To my surviving friend Remus Lupin, I would leave you something, but Ministry laws forbid werewolves from inheriting stuff – I know your family home and money were confiscated by the Ministry after your family were killed by Voldemort.

To my favourite cousin Andromeda, I reinstate you into the family along with leaving you 100,000 galleons. Little Nymphadora gets 50,000, (Tonks scowled as her first name was read) Ha! Ha! You can't get me for that one. I remember how you would scream as a baby every time someone would call you Nymphadora.

Everything else I have is left to my godson Harry James Potter. I leave him with these words – I was not your parents' secret keeper, Peter Pettigrew was and he is still alive in the animagus form of a rat. I leave the Black estate in the running of my good friend Lord Crichton until Harry turns 17. Crichton is an old family, who vanished after the then Lord Crichton joined the Cavaliers during the English Civil War, despite Ministry attempts to force our people to follow the Roundheads. The current Lord Crichton has agreed to come out to help Harry – we've been friends for a while.

Just in case there is an objection to this, it must be noted that Harry has a better connection to me than anyone else – his grandmother Dorea Potter is my father's sister. So, this will cannot be contested.

Narcissa and Draco stormed out of the room. The strange man walked over to Harry.

"Master Potter," he said, "My name is Lord Crichton. Your godfather was a good friend of mine and he honoured me by asking to help maintain his estate until you came of age. We must talk sometime, maybe during the Easter holidays."

"I'm sure that will be fine." Harry said. Andromeda stepped in.

"Lord Crichton, if you will send me an owl nearer the time, then we can arrange things." She said.

"Thank you Mrs. Tonks. The stories I hear about your kindness and hospitality are true it seems." Lord Crichton said before leaving.

Andromeda and Harry went to their home.

"I suppose you want to know about Sirius Black?" she asked.

"What's so important about him?" Harry asked, "What is a secret keeper and what has a man turning into a rat got to do with things?"

"Sirius Black is my cousin – his mother Walberga is my aunt and she practically ran the Black family, striking off anyone from the family who didn't abide with her wishes," Andromeda began, "I was the first of change to the family. In the past, every Black was sorted into Slytherin. I was sorted into Hufflepuff and later, Dora was also sorted into that house. Sirius was sorted into Gryffindor and boy, did Aunt Walberga go mad. She sent him Howler after Howler demanding a resorting. I was in my sixth year and her voice in a Howler was deafening – her normal shouting voice was bad enough.

"Sirius became great friends with your father which was also maddening for Aunt Walberga as the Blacks were supposed to be pro-dark. Peter Pettigrew, mentioned in that will was also a friend as was a man called Remus Lupin, who seems to have vanished. Not many people knew that Sirius, James and Peter became illegal animagi – the art of transforming yourself into an animal."

"How did you know?" Harry asked.

"Harry – this is Sirius and your father we're talking about. I was friends with your grandparents and visited their family home many times. Your grandparents might have been invisible to their exploits but there isn't something they could do and keep it hidden from me. I

will admit that becoming animagi at school age is quite the achievement. To cut a long story short, You-Know-Who was close to victory but your parents had defied him many times and he signed their death warrant. Thanks to a spy who worked for Dumbledore who warned him about it, Dumbledore convinced your parents to go into hiding under the Fidelius charm – a complex charm which hides the location of someone or something inside the mind of a person and only that person could divulge the location. Everyone, including me thought the Secret Keeper was Sirius. Days after the charm was performed, You-Know-Who attacked your home and you know the rest. Because it was believed Sirius was the Secret Keeper, he was sent to Azkaban. But what he said in the will is disturbing, Sirius also murdered thirteen Muggles along with Peter the day after your parent's deaths. Because of that will, things will now need to be re-examined and hopefully the truth will come out."

Andromeda started to ponder on things. "Even if Sirius could be found innocent, there's too much of a stain on the Black name along with the circumstances of him being thrown into prison. He was disowned by his mother because he refused to follow their ways and I was also disowned because I married your Uncle Ted, who is a Muggleborn."

"Can something be done about it?" asked Harry.

"Only Lord Black can reinstate me into the family. At the moment, Draco Malfoy is in line to inherit that title when he comes of age."

"Why him?" Harry asked.

"Don't you know – his mother Narcissa is my sister and right now, he's the only known male Black heir." Andromeda said – Harry had the look of surprise in his face.

Not long after Andromeda had her talk with Harry and returned him to school, he continued his research back in Hogwarts library. Thanks to a special spell, Madam Pince made temporary Braille copies of the books he wanted. He had asked Madam Bones to give him copies of the statements made by the victims of the monster. He had a list:

Yellow Eyes

Parseltongue heard at scene of crime

All on the second floor

Some sort of reflection involved

Chamber of Secrets?

Tom Riddle's diary

He knew it wasn't much to go on, but it was a start. He read through the books and made some notes. Thankfully, Madam Pince allowed him to use a Quick Quotes Quill to dictate his notes.

At her home, Hermione was doing the same thing. She quickly came to one conclusion. She wrote out a letter to Harry and tied it to the leg of Hedwig, who had delivered a letter a few hours before – Harry convinced McGonagall to allow the letter to go - and then Hedwig flew away.

Just before curfew, Madam Pince closed the library and escorted Harry (who was the only one left) back to Gryffindor Tower. Fang was outside the library – she refused to have the sappy dog in her library under any circumstances.

Hedwig flew into the Great Hall the following morning and delivered Hermione's letter to Harry. He turned it into Braille and read it. Remembering his own notes, it was obvious that the two had come to the same conclusion.

He got up and Lavender helped him go to the staff table.

"Professor McGonagall – I think I know what the monster is." Harry said.

Harry, McGonagall along with the heads of house and Amelia Bones reconvened in McGonagall's office.

"Very well Mr. Potter, what have you worked out?" The Headmistress asked.

"The Chamber of Secrets must be somewhere on the second floor – that's where all the attacks have taken place. The monster is a

Basilisk – looking directly into the yellow eyes of that creature is enough to kill. That also explains the Parseltongue heard at the scene."

"But Mr. Potter," Professor Flitwick said, "Why were the victims petrified instead of killed?"

"Because no-one saw it in a direct line of sight, only reflection. At the scene of the incidents, there was either a mirror or puddles of water," Harry said, he then turned to Dumbledore, "Professor – Dobby told me that the Chamber was last opened fifty years ago and a student was killed. He said the person died in a bathroom."

Suddenly, Dumbledore began to realise things. "I believe you have it Mr. Potter," he said, "A student was killed in the bathrooms fifty years ago. Minerva, don't you remember?"

"Yes," McGonagall said, "It was Myrtle Marter and she was in a bathroom – you don't mean that this Myrtle and our Moaning Myrtle are the same?"

"The very same," Dumbledore said, "Which means that the entrance to the Chamber of Secrets is in her bathroom. Fifty points to Gryffindor for making us see the obvious."

"But," Amelia Bones said, "that does not explain the who and why."

"Can that house-elf get the diary again?" Flitwick asked.

"I don't know." Harry said.

"There is no reason why he can't," Dumbledore said, "House-elf magic can be quite powerful, although they can't use it without their master or mistress' permission."

McGonagall stepped forward, "We'll worry about the diary later, what we need to do is to find the Chamber of Secrets and deal with the monster before someone else gets harmed."

As the staff and student made their way to leave the office, the Sorting Hat spoke out.

"Harry Potter, before this day is over, you will face your greatest fear."

Chapter Seven

After leaving Dumbledore's office, Harry and Lavender walked through the corridor to head back towards Gryffindor Tower. Suddenly, Harry stopped the pair.

"I can hear a hissing sound. Cover your eyes – it must be the Basilisk!" he said. The girl put on a pair of very dark sunglasses which she took out of her robes. Dumbledore had conjured them for her. A slithering sound could be heard.

"It's the monster!" Lavender said.

"Go and get help – I'll wait here – its eyes can't harm me!" Harry said.

"But..." she began.

"But nothing, get help!" Harry ordered. Reluctantly, Lavender ran off.

Harry could hear the sound of the Basilisk. He was unsure what to do. Then, he could hear the sound of singing and felt the fabric of a hat appear in his hand. Feeling it, he recognised the Sorting Hat.

"What do I do with this?" he asked.

"Put your hand in it Harry Potter." The Hat answered. Harry put his hand in the hat, felt metal then pulled it out. "That is the sword of Godric Gryffindor."

"What do I do with it? I can't see. I'm useless, I'm no good to anyone."

"Nonsense Mr. Potter!" the hat said, "You are not useless."

"I'm being faced by the creature of Slytherin, holding a sword in my hands, don't even know what way to face!" Harry said. He didn't know that Lavender had got help and they were around the corner.

"We must help him," McGonagall said.

"Harry must face his demons." Dumbledore said.

"It's my nightmare," Harry said, "it's woken me in terror ever since. I hid my fear then, as I hide it now, because..."

"Before this day is over, you will face your greatest fear..." the Sorting Hat said.

"My greatest fear is that I'll be afraid again." Harry said as the Basilisk continued to hiss at him. He then dropped the hat and gripped the sword, "But I fear it no more. You hear me – my nightmare is over!"

He ran in the direction of the creature and swung the sword. The Basilisk hissed as the sword hit it. Then, as if someone was directing his actions, he plunged his sword upwards. He could hear the sound of metal piercing flesh and bone. The creature stopped hissing and with a loud bang, fell to the ground. Harry then felt his knees giving way and fell to the ground himself.

"Harry – you did it. You've killed the monster of Slytherin." Lavender said, going over to him.

"Miss Brown, I think Mr. Potter needs to go to the hospital wing to be checked out." Dumbledore said.

An hour later, Poppy Pomfrey, free of her restrictions on treating Harry gave him a clean bill of health. Lavender was with him.

"I've done some thinking," Harry said, "I've decided to leave Hogwarts."

"Why?" Lavender asked, "Don't your friends or even I mean anything to you?"

"Yes you do," Harry said, "But magic relies on being able to see. I'll never see again so I have no place here."

"Harry – has no-one told you? You can have magical eyes!" Lavender shouted.

"Why didn't you tell me this before?" Harry asked.

"I thought someone would have told you," Lavender answered, "My uncle is an Auror called Alastor Moody. He lost an eye taking out

Death Eaters and he has a magical eye. If you don't mind, I'll ask him about it."

Harry had no idea what to say. Lavender left the hospital wing.

"How are you feeling Mr. Potter?" Dumbledore asked later on. Andromeda Tonks was with him.

"Why didn't you tell me I could have magical eye implants?" Harry asked.

"It involves a heavy risk and I didn't want you to be burdened with it." Dumbledore answered.

"That should be my choice." Harry said, "I was close to dropping out of Hogwarts because I couldn't see. Someone should have told me."

"I was planning on telling you," Andromeda said, "The eye specialist at St. Mungo's is investigating the possibility of magical eyes, but I've not said anything yet because I didn't want to get your hopes up."

"Lavender mentioned an Auror called Alastor Moody having a magical eye – is this right?" asked Harry.

"Yes, it's true." Dumbledore said.

Harry decided to change the subject. "Did you manage to find the Chamber of Secrets?" he asked.

"Yes we did. You and Miss. Granger were right – it was in Moaning Myrtle's bathroom. Whoever opened it forgot to close it after releasing the monster so we made our way down and found this huge chamber. We found the diary when we were there – it was a very powerful magical artefact." Dumbledore said.

"What aren't you telling me?" Harry asked.

"The diary was that powerful, it could force people to act against their will." Dumbledore said.

"So Ron's behaviour..." Harry began.

"Was under direct influence of the diary." Dumbledore said, "This clears him and Hagrid of all charges."

"That's good," Harry said, "Isn't it?"

"It depends on if Amelia Bones manages to issue pardons." Dumbledore said.

It was the following day. Dumbledore was reporting to Amelia Bones.

"From my personal observation, the diary was a Horcrux, created by Tom Riddle back in 1942. It has a strong compulsion charm to force people to write in it, the magic within can take them over. When we found it in the Chamber of Secrets, we saw a spirit form of Tom Riddle – he was using the energy of a student to restore himself to a body."

"Who was the student?" Amelia asked.

"A Slytherin student called Daphne Greengrass. I was able to have a conversation with the spirit form of Tom in order to buy time for my staff to destroy the diary – he admitted that Hagrid was framed – the two were at school together and that Ron and Ginny Weasley were acting under a form of the Imperious curse." Dumbledore said.

"I'll authorise the pardons for Hagrid and Mr. Weasley at once." Amelia Bones said, "The restraining order against the Weasleys involving Mr. Potter is revoked."

That evening, the whole school was in the Great Hall. Dumbledore stood up.

"We have a special event here," Dumbledore said, "thanks to research by Mr. Harry Potter, we have found out what the monster of Slytherin is and what the cause of the problem was. He also faced his greatest fear and fought it, destroying the monster. I award Gryffindor House one hundred points and Mr. Potter will be awarded a Special Award for Services to the School."

There was a massive round of applause from most of the houses. Then the doors to the Great Hall opened and in marched Hagrid. He walked towards Harry.

"I want to thank you Harry," the gentle half-giant said, "If it wasn't for you, I'd still be you know where."

"It's not Hogwarts without you Hagrid." Harry said. There was a massive round of applause again, this time started by the teachers and went on throughout the student population. A couple of Slytherin students started to clap but Draco stopped them.

The next day, Harry was taken into St Mungo's to have a meeting about the magical eyes.

"Now Harry, the tests have concluded that you can have magical eyes," the Healer said, "There are a few choices you can have. The first option, you can have eyes that are practically normal – no enhancements at all. Enhancements include the ability to see through walls, behind you, through invisibility cloaks. However, should you choose to have the enhancements, it means you will no longer be able to play Quidditch."

"Will it be because the enhancements will give me an unfair advantage?" Harry asked.

"You're right there." The Healer said.

"What will the cost be?" Andromeda Tonks asked.

"15,000 galleons for the basic surgery." The Healer said.

Before anyone could say anything, the door opened and Lord Crichton burst in.

"Why didn't anyone tell me that Mr. Potter was being seen today regarding eye implants?" he asked.

"Just because you're a Lord, sir," the Healer said, "Doesn't mean we have to report everything to you."

"This young man is the Heir to the House of Black when he comes of age," Lord Crichton said, "and since I am in charge of that estate until then, I think I had the right to know, especially since I am the only one who can authorise the expenditure of money on it."

"The money was going to come out of the Potter vaults." Andromeda said.

"Which happens to be locked down until Harry comes of age," Lord Crichton said, "Potter security measures. Someone tried to access them after James Potter died and they were put on lockdown until Harry turns 17."

"There's no need to argue!" Harry said, "I'll see what I have in my trust fund and use what I can of that."

"That money is supposed to get you through school young man," Crichton said, "As I am manager of the Black estate until you come of age, then I am authorised to take the money out."

"I thought Sirius Black's will was being contested by Lucius Malfoy?" Andromeda asked.

"One might think that, but as Lucius Malfoy's only connection to the Blacks is via his wife and son, he can't do a thing about it. Harry has more of a claim to the Black family fortune than Draco since his grandmother was Orion Black's sister and his godfather was Orion's son so Harry's claim is more valid. Also, the goblins threw out the claim by Malfoy."

Lord Crichton turned to the Healer. "Give Mr. Potter whatever he needs and charge it to the Black vault. Following his escape from Azkaban, Sirius expressed great regret for not being there for Harry over the years. He also hinted that he made sure Gilderoy Lockhart paid for his crimes."

As Harry listened, he felt a strange oddness about Crichton. He seemed to take great pleasure in mentioning that Sirius Black had killed Lockhart. He also seemed to know a lot.

"I will take my leave now," Crichton said, "I have a few things to deal with."

Contrary to what Vernon Dursley liked people to believe, he was not in overall charge of Grunnings. An elderly man called George Grunnings owned the company and he was in the process of selling up to help set up a nice retirement nest egg. But the main problem

about it was who to put in charge. His thoughts went away as his secretary came in with Lord Crichton. Grunnings was expecting him.

"What can I do for you Lord Crichton?" Mr. Grunnings asked.

"I heard you're trying to sell the company." Lord Crichton answered.

"I am, but.." Mr. Grunnings began.

"You're having a lot of problems getting bidders for some strange reason." Crichton finished.

"How do you know that?" Grunnings asked in surprise.

"I have my ways." Crichton said, "You're after a sum of 40 million pounds for the company. From what I can tell, that is below what the company is really worth. A number of potential clients have withdrawn after disastrous dinners with the Dursley family."

"You do your homework Lord Crichton." Mr. Grunnings said.

"I'll make you an offer Mr. Grunnings," Crichton said, "I'll give you 80 million, which is 10 million more than Grunnings is worth at the best of times but there are two conditions."

"What are they?" Grunnings asked, dreading the answer.

"First, you fire Vernon Dursley with immediate effect, no severance pay, no retirement benefits, no references. Secondly, I would like you to continue to work for the company as an advisor until things buck up and Grunnings is again the fine company it used to be."

To say Grunnings was happy with it was an understatement. He had been looking for an excuse to fire Dursley for years. He was curious though.

"What have you got against Vernon Dursley?" Grunnings asked, "I don't like the bloke much myself but I was just wondering."

"Because he is a child abuser," Crichton said, "He used Grunnings money to bribe the public officials to turn a blind eye. Also, I represent the estate of a man who is godfather to Dursley's nephew

on his wife's side. He would want justice for his godson. Without a penny to stand on, nothing can stop Dursley from serving time."

Grunnings was sickened as Crichton told him what he knew.

As soon as Crichton left, Vernon Dursley was called into Grunnings' office to be informed of his sacking. Security had to escort him from the premises. Things got worse for the family when Vernon got home – the bailiffs were removing stuff from the house and a FOR SALE sign was being put up.

"What is the meaning of this?" Vernon asked.

"Your loans are being called in." One of them said.

"But we don't owe anyone anything." Petunia protested.

"Our debts ended the day that freak Potter was murdered!" Vernon shouted.

"Did you borrow money from that freak Potter?" Petunia asked.

"Yes," Vernon said, "A lot. He promised that there was no rush in paying it back. After all we've done, I consider that debt paid off in full!"

"I'm afraid not," the lead bailiff said, "Your accounts were audited and it was discovered that you were paid money from the Potter estate, which was never spent on James Potter's son. The representative of Harry Potter's legal guardian has authorised the seizure of all your assets and belongings to make up this debt and since Mr. Potter has expressed a wish never to set foot in this house again, it is being sold on his behalf."

"But we own this house!" Vernon shouted.

"Incorrect again Mr. Dursley," the bailiff said, "James Potter's estate own the house – he made a deal with Mr. Evans before his death to allow you and your wife to live in this house, rent free, so you wouldn't be homeless."

"But where are we going to go?" Petunia protested, "Dudley needs all his things."

"You should have thought of that before you treated your nephew like scum." The bailiff answered.

Talking about Dudley, a taxi arrived and the overweight slob stepped out. He had just been expelled from Smeltings. The neighbourhood watched as the Dursleys were totally humiliated. Dudley watched as his toys and items were being given away to the neighbourhood children.

"Compensation for how that brat has treated you over the years." One of the bailiffs said.

"That's stealing!" Dudley shouted.

"Wrong," the bailiff said, "all the things in your house is being taken legally to cover the debts your father owes your uncle's estate. The current executor of the estate has decided to use your toys and other items to compensate your victims. I have a long list of complaints about you. However, our clients are not entirely heartless – you are being permitted to keep a collection of clothing."

A neighbour who had been watching things came up.

"What about their nephew? They told us that he had been stealing stuff from us for years but there was never any evidence to have him arrested." She asked.

"Ah yes, the truth is that Dudley Dursley and his gang stole the stuff. If you look through his things, I'm sure the stolen stuff is there. As for Mr. Potter, didn't you notice how the Dursleys dressed him in rags and he looked starved?" the bailiff asked.

The neighbour didn't say anything. Before anyone else could do or say anything, another car came in the area. A man stepped out and showed his Social Services ID. He was there to investigate concerns about Dudley's health and had a warrant to take Dudley away with him, which he did, despite Vernon and Petunia's protests.

"There is a Lord Crichton to see you." Narcissa Malfoy said to Lucius the next day.

"Ah yes, I've been expecting him," Mr. Malfoy said, "Send him in please."

The doors opened and Lord Crichton came in.

"What can I do for you Malfoy and make it quick?" he asked.

"I was wondering how you managed to file a fake will with Gringotts and get away with it." Mr. Malfoy said.

"What makes you think it's a fake?" Lord Crichton asked, "The goblins would know a fake a mile away."

"Well LordCrichton," Malfoy continued, "With Sirius Black on the run, he wouldn't be able to get into Gringotts to file a new will."

"As you know MisterMalfoy," Crichton answered, "The goblins don't care who is on the run or not. As long as the person isn't bringing malice upon the goblin nation, they will serve anyone."

"My son would make a better Lord Black than that Muggle raised trash," Malfoy said, "I'm prepared to allow you to pass it all onto Draco when he comes of age instead of straight away – name your terms."

"I won't pass it onto the spawn of a Death Eater."

"I was under the Imperius Curse," Malfoy said, "Those sorts of claims will ensure you occupy Sirius Black's old cell."

"Oh please," Crichton said, "Everyone knows you bribed the Minister into issuing a pardon for you and your friends. Things are changing Mr. Malfoy and believe it or not, you might be put into Black's cell."

"How so?"

"You planted Tom Riddle's diary in order to help discredit Arthur Weasley and when his son was found at the scene of your son being petrified, it helped your cause." Crichton said.

"Why don't you prove it?" Malfoy asked.

"Oh, I can't prove it right now, but you should consider yourself warned that should you find yourself under suspicion for anything, questions about this whole incident might be asked by Amelia Bones with you under Veritserum. Then we'll see who will be occupying Sirius Black's old cell."

Lord Crichton stood up, turned and walked away. Before Malfoy could do anything, Crichton had left. He was stunned – no-one dared speak to him like that.

Harry woke up a couple of days later to find his world still surrounded in darkness. He sat up with a start. A Healer noticed him and ran over.

"What's wrong?" she asked.

"I still can't see anything!" Harry shouted, "The operation didn't work. I don't have eyes!"

"Relax Harry," the Healer said, "We've got to magically activate them." She waved her wand and slowly, Harry could see things. Everything was out of focus however.

"Just give it a minute," the Healer told him, "and everything will come into focus."

After a couple of minutes, Harry could see the Healer – an attractive red-head woman in her mid-30's.

"I can see – I see you." He said. The Healer waved a hand in front of him.

"How many fingers did I hold up?" she asked.

"Three." Harry answered.

"Very good." She continued. Over the next half hour, she ran all sorts of tests. "Well Harry, it seems the operation was a success. In a couple of days time after you've adjusted to them, we'll be able to change the colour and look. As requested, there are no enhancements but in two weeks time, you will have to go through a check before you will be able to play Quidditch again, just to be sure you won't have any unfair advantages."

"Thank you." Harry said.

Chp8